

**In the Abstract:**

Please replace the Abstract with the following Abstract:

A nonpolarization-dependent method and apparatus for optical sampling of a user optical signal of a known frequency range (e.g., corresponding to 1550 nm wavelength) uses a probe signal in an unsplit form and applies a conversion {e.g., by sum frequency generation (SFG)} operation in a first stage to the probe signal and to a first polarization component of the user optical signal (e.g., 's' component) to produce a first component of an output signal. In a second stage, a second polarization component of the user optical signal (e.g., 'p' component) is rotated by 90° to align with the first polarization component and then converted by mixing with the unsplit probe signal to produce a second component of an output signal. The first and second output component signals are both added and measured using a photomultiplier tube (PMT) or an avalanche diode. ~~If the probe signal is approximately a second harmonic of the user optical signal, then the output will be a near-third harmonic. The SFG may be performed by using a nonlinear wavelength converter such as a periodically poled lithium niobate (PPLN) crystal of predetermined dimensions. The first and second stages may be completed using different PPLNs, or, by using a single PPLN in a double pass technique. In the double pass technique, in the first stage, the 's' component of the user input signal may be subjected to SFG to produce the first near-third harmonic output signal by using an unsplit second harmonic probe signal. A ¼ waveplate in the double pass technique rotates the second polarization component of the user's input signal by 45° twice to achieve a 90° rotation. From the second stage in the double pass technique, a second near-third harmonic output signal, e.g., at 520 nm is generated, which is also directed to the PMT similar to the first stage. Higher conversion efficiencies are achieved by using both~~

~~polarization components of the user input signal, and using an unsplit probe signal from a source which is approximately half the power which would otherwise be needed if the probe signal is split.~~